



PRESS RELEASE

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PROTECT YOUR CAR – LEAVE IT LOCKED, LIT AND EMPTY

THE VOLUNTEER-LED, GRASSROOTS CHARITY, NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, LAUNCHES NATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN, *PROTECT YOUR CAR*, ON 31ST MARCH AS CAR CRIME EXPECTED TO RISE AS LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS EASE

- Due to Covid-19 and repeated lockdowns, people have been using their cars less than previously³
- Car crime has decreased during the pandemic but expected to rise as Covid-19 restrictions ease³
- Alarming, one car is stolen every ten minutes.¹
- 44% of cars were broken into via an unlocked door²
- 80% of car crime occurs during the evening or at night²
- Only 46% of stolen cars are recovered³
- Personal belongings within the car are at as much risk of being stolen as the car itself.²
- Neighbourhood Watch have launched a PROTECT YOUR CAR campaign to encourage everyone to keep their car's safety top of mind.

Due to Covid-19 and repeated lockdowns, people aren't using their cars as much as they used to. However, car crime remains a pressing problem in the UK – alarmingly, one car is stolen every ten minutes.¹ Neighbourhood Watch have launched a new campaign to encourage everyone to keep their car's safety top of mind.

John Hayward-Cripps, CEO of Neighbourhood Watch Network, says *“Most car crimes happen because cars are left unlocked. There is a misconception that some cars are auto-locking and lock themselves if left unattended after a period of time. This isn't always correct.”*

Hayward-Cripps continues *“Another misconception is that your car is too old and no one will bother stealing it. This is also incorrect – both new and old cars are at risk. Having a car stolen or broken into is more than simply a hassle, it can impact on people's livelihoods. The good news is that there are simple steps everyone can take to help reduce the risk to their car. With only a 46% recovery rate³ we're reminding everyone to leave your car **locked, lit and empty.**”*

PROTECT YOUR CAR, LEAVE IT:

1. LOCKED
LOCK YOUR CAR WHEN YOU LEAVE IT

2. LIT
PARK IN A WELL-LIT AREA

3. EMPTY
HIDE ANY ITEMS ON SHOW

**SHARE THESE 3 STEPS
WITH 3 FRIENDS**



www.ourwatch.org.uk

Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales, CID no. 1173349

Neighbourhood Watch is encouraging car owners to leave your car:

1. Locked²

A simple mistake that can prove calamitous: **44%** of cars are broken into via an unlocked door. [Leave your car locked video.](#)

2. Lit²

80% of car crime occurs during the evening or at night. Parking near streetlamps or in a busy area can deter thieves. [Leave your car lit video.](#)

3. Empty (or with no items on show)

Owners often forget that personal belongings within the car are at as much risk of being stolen as the car itself. [Leave your car empty video.](#)

Deborah Waller, Senior Communications and Digital Manager at Neighbourhood Watch, says “*Car thieves are opportunists. Leaving items on a car seat or forgetting to lock your car can act as an invitation for crime. We want to instil the habit of double-checking where and how you’ve parked with our three simple steps: **leave it locked, lit and empty.**”*

Waller continues “As a local charity with a trusted voice in the community, we’re asking everyone to proactively support their neighbours and friends by sharing our three steps with three others. By spreading the word, we’re confident we can crack down on car crime which can be deeply distressing and debilitating for its victims.”

Being rooted within communities, Neighbourhood Watch is well-connected to both community members and local organisations, placing them in a unique position to be effective in not only crime prevention but also at the forefront of supporting neighbours through a crisis.

Since the start of the pandemic (March 2020) over 86,000 people have opted to receive information from Neighbourhood Watch, and their new website attracts on well over 100,000 monthly visitors – an increase of 88% from the previous year. The vast majority of visitors are using the search facility to find their local Neighbourhood Watch scheme amongst the 26,000+ volunteer-led street level groups registered with the charity.

Throughout the pandemic, amazing people from the 90,000 strong pool of Neighbourhood Watch volunteers have been active community organisers, supporting those most in need. From crowdfunding for 3D printers to make PPE visors for care workers, to supporting residents with their shopping and medical needs, Neighbourhood Watch volunteers have been there since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis.

In these difficult times of Covid-19, we have all seen an increasing need to feel connected to our surrounding communities, and as a result, Neighbourhood Watch's services are more in demand than ever.

Neighbourhood Watch aims to make crime prevention and the ability to connect with your community easy and accessible for all.

The public can get involved with the campaign by following our social channels ([Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Instagram](#) / [LinkedIn](#)) and sharing our posts with at least 3 friends, and visit the landing page www.ourwatch.org.uk/protectyourcar for more details.

Ends

Notes to Editor

1. *ITV: [ITV, 2020](#)*
2. *ONS data:*
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesaappendixtables>
3. *OPAL and Police National Computer:*
<https://www.npcc.police.uk/NationalPolicing/OPALNationalIntelligenceUnitforSeriousOrganisedAcq.aspx>
4. John Hayward-Cripps is available for interview and comment regarding this story. Email: Deborah.waller@ourwatch.org.uk
5. Neighbourhood Watch has over 90,000 coordinators and 2.3 million member households in England and Wales.
6. More information about Neighbourhood Watch, including how to join, is available at ourwatch.org.uk
7. Neighbourhood Watch Network can be found on [Facebook](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Instagram](#) / [LinkedIn](#)